

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2014

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR
MONROE
WOOD
BEATY
STROUGH

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:
ED BARTHOLOMEW, PRESIDENT
JOHN WHEATLEY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
AMANDA ALLEN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISORS BROCK
MCDEVITT
SEEBER
SIMPSON
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development Committee to order at 10:46 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ed Bartholomew, President of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), who distributed presentation folders to the Committee members which contained promotional and informational materials pertaining to commercial space available at various business/industrial parks in Warren County; *a copy of the presentation folder is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Bartholomew informed the EDC had conducted its Second Annual Planning and Zoning Forum last week which had been attended by over 70 individuals representing 18 municipal organizations and municipalities. He added there had been a diversified group of speakers including Eric Siy, Executive Director of the Fund for Lake George (FLG), who provided an update on Project Jefferson. He said the speakers had also included representatives from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC); the Adirondack Park Agency (APA); and the counsel to the area planning and zoning boards. He stated attendance at the Forum had been good and he thanked Mr. Strough for his attendance.

Mr. Bartholomew advised the EDC had closed on the Hacker Boat Company parcel in Queensbury Business Park last week. He said the closing had included the purchase of approximately 17 acres of land and he pointed out Hacker Boat Company had received all of the necessary permits. He anticipated construction would begin as early as this fall but would most likely commence in the spring of 2015. He commented the construction would be for a 90,000 square foot building which was estimated to cost approximately \$3 million. He added once completed the Hacker Boat Company Building would employ approximately 80 people. He commented the building would be constructed on the corner of Queensbury Avenue and Stone Quarry Road.

Mr. Bartholomew informed of another project in the works with Just Beverages who had announced that the new beverage company would be headquartered in the City of Glens Falls. He said the first production facility would be at the former location of St. Alphonsus Roman Catholic Church on Broad Street. He advised Just Beverages had entered into a water and access agreement to purchase water from the City of Glens Falls on Watershed property located in Queensbury. He added Just

Beverages would be purchasing sub-surface water from the bedrock aquifer and not directly from the reservoir. He commented the EDC had begun working with Just Beverages in February and Chairman Geraghty and Mr. Taylor had been present at the initial meeting. He opined it was important to show a united front when bringing in companies from out-of-State to emphasize the support for economic development in the area.

Mr. Bartholomew acknowledged all of the recent attention for the Glens Falls Civic Center and reminded the Committee members that hockey games would return to the venue on Saturday, October 4, 2014 with an exhibition game at 7:00 p.m. between the Adirondack Flames and the Utica Comets. He advised the home opening game would be against the Albany Devils on Saturday, October 11, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. On Saturday, October 18, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., he continued, the Adirondack Flames would play the Lehigh Valley Phantoms (formerly the Adirondack Phantoms). He noted this would be the only appearance of the Lehigh Phantoms at the Glens Falls Civic Center this year.

Mr. Bartholomew stated there had been positive improvements in the labor statistics and he pointed out the New York State Department of Labor had reported the unemployment rate for Warren County to be 4.9% as of August of 2014, reflecting a decrease compared to the August 2013 rate of 6.0%. He commented the unemployment rates for neighboring counties were 5.0% for Washington County and 5.7% for Essex County.

Mr. Bartholomew reported the EDC had worked with the Adirondack Gateway Council to conduct a series of meetings in September in the Towns of Hadley, Corinth, Chester, Johnsburg, Granville, Hartford, Salem and Moreau. He expressed that there was a lot of discussion in New York State about improving Broadband services; however, he added, in many areas of Warren, Washington and Saratoga Counties there was a lack of basic cell phone coverage. He opined cell phone coverage was important for public safety, as well as business purposes. He commented Brant Lake Taxi had a fleet of 5 taxis in the Hamlet of Brant Lake which depended on cell phone coverage for their business. He added if one of these taxis had an issue while transporting a passenger, they had no ability to call for assistance in some areas. He mentioned the Department of Public Works personnel in these areas relied on radio towers transmissions for communication but would like to be able to utilize cell phones for backup.

Mr. Bartholomew said while it was important to continue to look at improving Broadband services in the area, the County needed to focus on improved cell phone coverage, as well. He mentioned Ms. Wood was working on white space technology as an alternative to Broadband services in the Town of Thurman. He reiterated improved cell phone coverage was vital not only for public safety reasons but also for local businesses. He stated several businesses from the Towns of Chester and Salem had spoken about the issue during the meetings. He added Hicks Orchard in the Town of Granville depended on cell phone coverage in order to accept credit card payments.

Mr. Monroe advised he had received numerous comments from business owners pertaining to the lack of cell phone coverage. He stated the APA policy which required that the cell phone towers not be visible was partially responsible for the lack of cell phone coverage in the northern portions of Warren County. He pointed out there was a cell phone tower on Panther Mountain in the Town of Chester which the APA had ordered be reduced in height by approximately 20 feet because it was visible at the time.

Mr. Bartholomew said the EDC would organize a meeting in late October or early November for public service entities and businesses in Warren County, Eastern Saratoga County and Washington County to discuss the development of a grant application to be sent to Empire State Development,

the Governor's Office and the Federal Government to determine how cell phone coverage and Broadband services could be improved in the region. He noted that in the larger urban areas of Queensbury, the City of Glens Falls and South Glens Falls there was a need for improved access to Broadband services but he said the first task would be to obtain funding to improve cell phone coverage. He commented there were new technologies available, such as repeaters which could be placed in smaller areas in obscure places like telephone poles or inside of church steeples. A brief discussion ensued.

In furtherance of economic development for Warren County, Mr. Bartholomew reported the EDC had undertaken additional promotional activities. He commented the presentation folders contained information which was intended to encourage businesses to relocate to Warren County. He added there was also an internal campaign within Warren County for those businesses looking to expand their current operations. He mentioned EDC was also looking at companies with a large number of vendors to determine if the vendors had an interest in expanding their businesses. He circulated an advertisement to the Committee members and noted it had appeared in the latest edition of the *Capital District Business Review*; *a copy of the advertisement is on file with the minutes*. He commented the advertisement highlighted the Queensbury Business Park and Tech Meadows Business Park. He advised there were a series of advertisements which highlighted various properties throughout Warren County.

Mr. Bartholomew apprised a video presentation had been created which was currently in draft form and was intended to promote the following locations:

- Chester Industrial Park;
- Baker Property & Site in Warrensburg;
- Queensbury Business Park;
- Airport IDA (Industrial Development Agency) Industrial Park; and
- Tech Meadows Business Park.

Mr. Bartholomew requested that Supervisors inform the EDC of properties in their municipality which were available for industrial or manufacturing use. He noted the EDC required the consent of the property owners to present or promote their properties. He commented the properties in the video presentation were either municipally owned or were owned by the Warren-Washington Counties IDA. He advised Chairman Geraghty had obtained consent of the property owner for promotion of the parcel on Schroon River Road in Warrensburg (the Baker Property & Site). He said there was another property available in the Town of Chester and Mr. Monroe was working on obtaining consent for promotion of that parcel. He noted there were 5 properties selected for the video presentation but there were a total of 9 properties that the EDC was working on promoting. He added the EDC would like to have at least one property to promote from each of the municipalities in Warren County. Mr. Bartholomew played the video presentation for the Committee members and explained various attributes pertaining to each location. He noted the footage in the video were aerial views and the information was duplicated in the materials contained in the presentation folder.

Pertaining to the Chester Industrial Park, Mr. Bartholomew stated one of the issues in the Town of Chester was the lack of natural gas infrastructure which meant potential businesses would need to rely on propane or compressed natural gas providers. He noted the Chester Industrial Park was comprised of about 17 acres subdivided into 1-acre lots. He commented this property had already received APA approval which was a positive attribute. He mentioned there had been a lot of interest in this property but official contracts had not been executed.

Concerning the Baker Property & Site in the Town of Warrensburg, Mr. Bartholomew advised this property spanned both sides of Schroon River Road and was partially wooded. He indicated this

property had been a former operating sawmill which was in close proximity to timber and minerals. He advised the property was 64 acres and was available for immediate development. Similar to the Town of Chester, he continued, the Town of Warrensburg also had the issue of a lack of natural gas infrastructure; however, he added, 3 phase power was available within a half mile of this property.

Regarding the Queensbury Business Park, Mr. Bartholomew apprised this property was located off Dix Avenue in the Town of Queensbury. He said the property was 1.5 miles from Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport. He advised that Queensbury Business Park housed the New York State National Guard Readiness Center and was the future home of Hacker Boat Company. He pointed out the property adjoined the National Grid Substation. He commented the property was located 1.5 miles from Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport.

Pertaining to the Airport IDA Industrial Park, Mr. Bartholomew pointed out that Mr. Taylor served as Chairman of the Warren-Washington Counties IDA which owned this property. He stated the property adjoined the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport. He commented this property was located in the Town of Queensbury in Warren County and the Town of Kingsbury in Washington County. He mentioned there had been more development on the Warren County portion of the property so the majority of the 66 acres of available property was within Washington County. He pointed out a business located in Washington County would have employees who resided in both Counties. He commented a large portion of the property was wooded and would require clearing prior to development. He said the businesses currently located at the Airport IDA Industrial Park were diverse which was a positive attribute.

Concerning the Tech Meadows Business Park, Mr. Bartholomew apprised this property had resulted from a collaboration between Warren County, the Town of Queensbury and the City of Glens Falls. He noted the close proximity to Carey Business Park in the Town of Queensbury. He reported the property was comprised of 35 acres subdivided into 5-acre lots. He apprised the property currently had one tenant, the UA Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 773 Training Center. He commented a positive attribute of both Tech Meadows Business Park and Carey Business Park was that access to both was within ½ mile of Interstate-87 via Exit 18. He said the property had water, sewer, natural gas and 3 phase power infrastructure. He stated Warren County had a diversity of products and locations.

Mr. Bartholomew reiterated his request that Supervisors inform the EDC of available commercial properties within their municipalities. He stated the EDC was also working on promoting Carey Business Park and the former Ciba Geigy property for inclusion in the video presentation. He noted the EDC required permission to access the properties in order to film and promote the property for sale.

There being no further business to come before the Economic Growth & Development Committee, on motion made by Ms. Wood and seconded by Mr. Beaty, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist